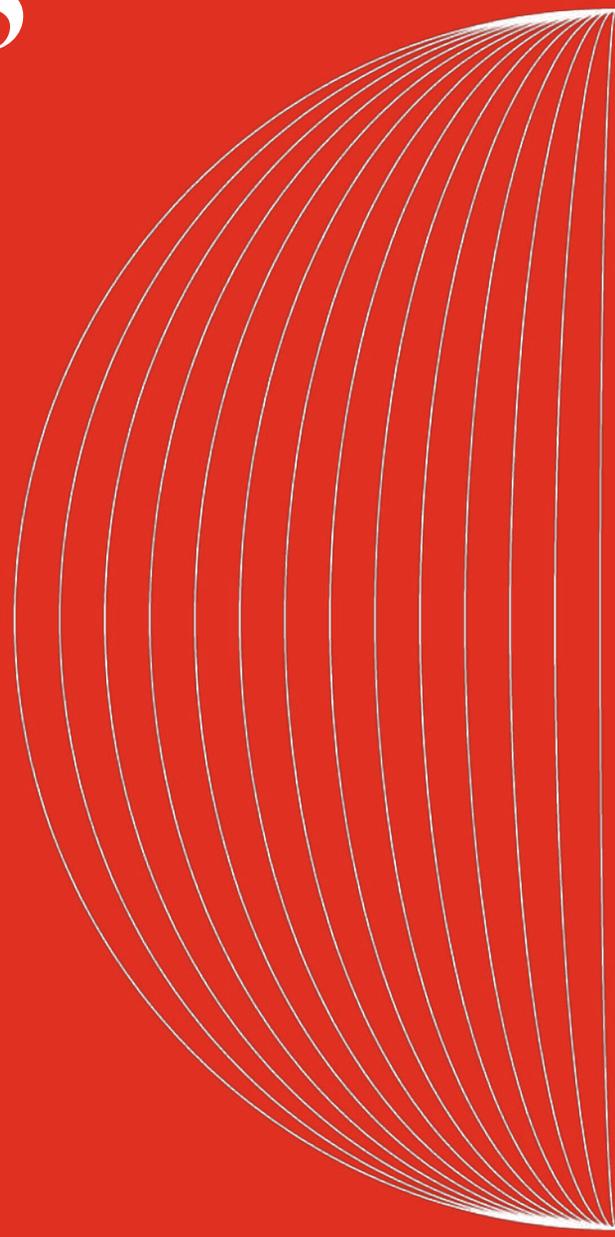


OKRS AND CFRS

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Learn more about goal setting and OKRs
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INTRODUCTION

OKRS and CFRs

In *Measure What Matters*, John Doerr introduces a sibling to Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) called “CFRs,” which are short for: Conversations, Feedback, and Recognition. CFRs give the sometimes black or white grading of OKRs the necessary color to paint a more descriptive picture. CFRs allow a team to go beyond the question, “Was the goal achieved or not?”

To hazard a soccer analogy: Let’s say objectives are the goal lines, the targets you’re aiming for, and key results are the incremental markers on the field. To flourish as a group, players and coaches need something more, something vital to any collective endeavor. CFRs embody all the interactions that tie the team together in a game and from one game to the next. They’re the videotape postmortems, the intrasquad meetings, the replay huddles—and the goal line celebrations for jobs well done.

Together with OKRs, CFRs combine to become Continuous Performance Management. However, while OKRs are widely understood, the ideas of Conversations, Feedback, and Recognition are not.

Let’s break them down:

- What’s the main difference between an OKR and a CFR?
- What is continuous performance management?
- What are some good questions to ask for Conversation and Feedback?
- Why is recognition so important?
- What is “continuous recognition?”

What's the main difference between an OKR and a CFR?

Objectives are what you want your team to accomplish. Key results describe how you will do it. Objectives are significant and action-oriented. Key results are specific and measurable. OKRs can only be graded with "complete" or "incomplete." CFRs, on the other hand, are the result of public, transparent OKRs and afford a larger vocabulary.

CFRs should be happening through the OKR cycle and should take place in the 1:1s. They should also take place at the end of an OKR cycle. The conversation should be in-person or over a video conferencing service, not on Slack or over the phone, and should include goal-setting, reflection, and ongoing progress updates. The feedback should be specific and constructive—an opportunity for employees to say to their supervisors: what do you need from me to be successful? And now let me tell you what I need from you.

What are some good questions to ask for Conversation and Feedback?

Some questions to get your ongoing Conversation and Feedback started in 1:1s include:

- How are your OKRs coming along?
- What critical capabilities do you need to be successful?
- Are there any blockers that could stop you from attaining your objectives?
- What OKRs need to be adjusted—or added, or eliminated—in light of shifting priorities?

Some ideas for questions at the end of an OKR cycle include:

- If we accomplished our goal, what contributed to our success?
- If we didn't accomplish it, what obstacles did we encounter?
- Was the goal harder or easier to achieve than you'd thought when you set it?
- If we were to rewrite the goal, what would we change?

- What have we learned that might alter our approach for our next cycle's OKRs?

Tips for giving good feedback

Feedback can be highly constructive if it's specific.

For negative feedback, you could say: You didn't respond to that client's email, and I thought it came off as unprofessional.

For positive feedback: You did a great job at that meeting. I thought you were prepared and well-spoken, and it was very smart to close with the next steps.

Why is recognition so important?

Recognition is often the most underestimated component of CFRs and the least well understood one in the acronym. Recognition is important because appreciation is a fundamental human desire. Furthermore, modern company culture often makes recognition performance-based and horizontal. It crowdsources meritocracy.

Recognition in CFRs can be peer-to-peer, which helps those who may not normally be noticed by leaders get noticed.

The best part is, it can be as simple as a "thank you."

What is continuous recognition?

Continuous recognition is just as it sounds: recognition all the time—where merited. It is a powerful driver of engagement. Here are some ways to implement it:

- **Institute peer-to-peer recognition:** When employee achievements are consistently recognized by their peers, gratitude becomes ingrained in the culture. A weekly all-hands, which includes unsolicited, unedited thank yous from anyone to anyone, is a great way to encourage peer-to-peer recognition.
- **Establish clear criteria:** Recognize people for actions and results: completion of special projects, achievement of company goals, demonstrations of company values. Replace "Employee of the Month" with "Achievement of the Month."
- **Share recognition stories:** Newsletters or company blogs can supply the narrative behind the accomplishment, giving recognition more meaning.

- **Make recognition frequent and attainable:** Hail smaller accomplishments, too: that extra effort to meet a deadline, that special polish on a proposal, the little things a manager might take for granted.
- **Tie recognition to company goals and strategies:** Customer service, innovation, teamwork, cost cutting—any organizational priority can be supported by a timely shout-out.

If I have more Questions, where should I send them?

We love to get questions! Also, if you are using OKRs, tell us. We'd love to hear from you:

hello@whatmatters.com



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